



National Urban Fellows

A Master of Public Administration fellowship and mentorship experience brings diverse perspectives to social justice leadership

INTRODUCTION

Leadership matters and leaders need to be as diverse as the many stakeholders in their communities and organizations. That, in a nutshell, is the philosophy behind the National Urban Fellows leadership development programs, which are targeted primarily at people of color and women.

“Leadership representation means that at the table, shaping policy, shaping direction, are people who are bringing diverse perspectives, making unique contributions. People who care about a wide range of stakeholders and understand that a blanket solution doesn’t solve the problem or issue for everyone equally,” says National Urban Fellows board member Jacinta Gauda.

The National Urban Fellows Master of Public Administration (MPA) Fellowship is a 14-month program that links graduate-level academic training with a nine-month mentorship experience in a large nonprofit or government agency.¹ Fellows earn an MPA from the School of Public Affairs at Baruch College, part of the City University of New York.

An MPA degree provides the management, financing, communication, and research tools necessary for students with undergraduate degrees in a range of disciplines to excel in public service. But fellows are expected to go

¹ In addition to the MPA Fellowship program, which is the subject of this report, National Urban Fellows has two other major initiatives. America’s Leaders of Change is a one-year intensive executive leadership program (read more at www.nuf.org/aloc-overview). The Public Service Leadership Diversity Initiative works to promote diversity in the public sector by building a pipeline of qualified candidates of color and dismantling barriers to their inclusion at the leadership level. (Read more at www.nuf.org/diversity-overview.)

beyond academic training says Gauda. “While National Urban Fellows is a degree-granting program, it is also a program that develops a kind of courageous, social justice leadership. Combining those two ideas together is really what makes it different.”

The National Urban Fellows MPA program was founded in 1969 and by 2013 had trained more than 1,400 fellows. Launched at the height of the Civil Rights movement, it has retained its emphasis on training committed leaders with the talent and determination to become agents of change. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) began funding the program in 2005 as a mentorship site, and has since supported between two and four fellows every year. Since 2010, it has also supported initiatives to add a focus on health policy to the experiences of all fellows.

“We want to increase representation because we want different outcomes in our society... This is leadership for change in those areas that are of great importance to people in our communities.”—Jacinta Gauda, National Urban Fellows board member

WHAT PROBLEM IS THE PROJECT ADDRESSING?

Racial, ethnic, and gender imbalances persist in public, private, and nonprofit leadership positions. Research published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation indicates that only 15-18 percent of the leaders in the federal government, state elective positions, nonprofit organizations, and foundations are people of color.² Yet more than one-third of the American population is non-white, and the United States is expected to become a “majority minority” nation by 2040.

When diverse stakeholders are not at the table, decisions are more likely to be made without considering the implications for all communities. “If we are creating public policy, we must make sure we are asking the essential questions that play to all stakeholders,” emphasizes Gauda. “We see this all the time where a particular policy doesn’t benefit everyone equally—perhaps because the thinking that went into that policy was not full. It was not informed by a variety of perspectives.”

² Annie E. Casey Foundation. *Nonprofit Executive Leadership and Transitions Survey*. 2004. Available online at www.aecf.org/upload/publicationfiles/executive_transition_survey_report2004.pdf.

Moreover, an eager pool of talent is not being adequately tapped, according to Luis Alvarez, who became president of the National Urban Fellows in 1976, served in that capacity for more than three decades, and now holds the post of president emeritus in perpetuity, points to “a tremendous desire in our communities to participate in the leadership life of the country.”

The research literature supports the idea that diversity influences decision-making in organizations for the better, says Debra Joy Pérez, PhD, MA, MPA, former assistant vice president for Research and Evaluation at RWJF.³ “It enhances the work that we do. It is a question of quality. “Solutions derived from people who share the experiences of the people with whom we work” are more likely to be effective, says Pérez, a National Urban Fellow alumni and the driver of RWJF’s decision to serve as a mentorship site and provide additional program funding.

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

The National Urban Fellows MPA Fellowship gives mid-career women and minority professionals the chance to earn a degree while building leadership skills. The degree combines a rigorous curriculum with active mentorship and networking opportunities. “We are not only going to challenge you on the academic side, we are also going to challenge you on the programmatic front, doing work at a very high level,” says Miguel A. Garcia Jr., (’85) president and CEO of the National Urban Fellows. “If you can succeed in our fellowship, you enter as a fellow, but you exit a leader.”

Part of the appeal for many prospective candidates is the opportunity to keep working while earning an advanced degree. “I wanted to go to school, but not take two years off from work,” said Jason León, MPA, now director of Corporate Relations, Communications, and Programs at the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility in Washington. (Read [León’s profile](#).) “I wanted to continue in that groove of working.”

But the fellowship is far more than a degree—fellows are expected to become drivers of change Garcia says. “The reason we bring people into this program is to create accomplished public sector leaders who become advocates for their respective institutions. That is going to involve the environment, transportation issues, how we reform our schools.” Fellows gain “an appetite to become advocates at the highest levels. We anticipate that some of our fellows will decide to run for elective office.”

³ In August 2013, Pérez left RWJF to become Vice President for Knowledge Support at the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

“We hope and expect that they will ask the question no one wants to ask in a room because their position is to stir around the questions that no one is asking. We don’t create fellows so they become entrenched bureaucrats.”—Miguel A. Garcia Jr. (’85), National Urban Fellows president and CEO

The Shark Tank: Selecting the Fellows

Fellows are selected through an intensive application and interview process, including a full day in New York with other candidates. Alumnus Erik Estrada, MPA, now a project officer at RWJF’s *New Jersey Health Initiatives* program, calls it “one of the most memorable interviews I’ve ever had.” (Read [Estrada’s profile](#).)

Garcia explains why. About one out of every two fellowship applicants is invited to New York to enter what the program calls the Shark Tank. The day begins at 8 a.m. Each candidate makes a 60-second presentation to their peers and alumni and faculty judges, followed by three different writing projects. Next, in a “fishbowl exercise,” candidates work in small groups in front of the judge’s panel. A 30-minute test assesses individual math and statistics skills. Finally, before the day ends at 5 p.m., participants come together again to critique their own performances.

“Most individuals have never been scrutinized for that length of time,” acknowledges Garcia. The elaborate assessment process is designed to identify talented people, of course, but also to find those who respect the power of working together. “We challenge them to not only communicate, to handle quantitative assignments, but more importantly, we want to see how well candidates collaborate with each other. You can be super-bright, but if you are not a team player, this program may not be ideal for you.”

An Intensive Commitment

In a typical year, about 40 to 50 people are selected as fellows. Until 2011, full tuition was included in the award, but students in the last two classes have been asked to contribute \$5,000 a year to that ever-rising cost. Fellows are paid a \$25,000 stipend, and receive health insurance, a book allowance, relocation funds, and travel reimbursement.

The program begins with 11 weeks of full-time classwork at Baruch’s Graduate School of Public Affairs, from June to August. The 42-credit curriculum includes courses in research and analysis, communications, finance and economics, education, health and public policy, management and administration, and leadership.

A nine-month mentorship follows, with assignments determined through a competitive matchmaking process. Mentors interview incoming fellows and indicate their top choices,

with final decisions made by National Urban Fellows staff. During the mentorship, fellows continue course work remotely, earning an additional 18 credits.

With their mentorship complete, all the fellows return to the Baruch classroom for seven more weeks of full-time study. Class work is enriched by interactions among fellows, who bring a broad array of professional experiences to the discussion. “You had people giving examples from their work in government or nonprofits. It brought it all to life,” says León. “The classroom cohort setting was valuable and intense.”

Meanwhile, for their master’s degree, fellows are also completing a capstone project in an important area of public policy. Topics are as diverse as the fellows themselves—from the impact of health reform on early detection of breast and cervical cancer to using text messaging to engage young people of color with diabetes, from examining healthy tensions in corporate philanthropy to evaluating cross-sector partnerships in the Oakland, Calif., school system.

Fourteen months after enrolling, participants are awarded the Master of Public Administration degree. “It was like boot camp,” says Danté McKay, MPA, an alumnus who is now Georgia state director of Enroll America, a national nonprofit organization that is helping the uninsured and underinsured gain coverage under the federal Affordable Care Act. (Read [McKay’s profile](#).) “I basically worked around the clock.”

Core Goal: Building Networks

Building networks in which women and people of color are more broadly represented is at the philosophical core of the program. Historically, people of color have been left out of professional networks, and many are unaware of their influence, notes Leticia Peguero, MPA. A National Urban Fellows alumnus, Peguero was part of the first generation in her family to attend college.

“This idea of how important networks are and why I should have been paying attention to that when I was 20 and why it is important to sit on a board.... Those little nuggets of information don’t get passed on. No one tells you,” says Peguero, who is now executive director of the Andrus Family Fund in New York. (Read [Peguero’s profile](#).)

To build mutual support, each cohort of fellows travels together through the classroom-based component of the fellowship. They meet again regularly, at an annual leadership conference, in collaborative assignments, and via various symposia, seminars, and e-learning opportunities. Once fellows graduate, they can go to their classmates and to fellows in other classes for the support they need. “A lot of the success that a lot of us achieve is building your network, having great mentors, having support,” says Jason León.

The National Urban Fellows “creates a pipeline of people who are ready, smart and qualified, and can then call on each other.”—Leticia Peguero, National Urban Fellows alumnus

HOW DOES RWJF SUPPORT THE PROGRAM?

RWJF’s Involvement as a Mentorship Site

RWJF has served as a mentoring site for 22 National Urban Fellows from 2005 to 2013, and has committed to continuing that support at least through June 2014. Many of the RWJF-supported placements are located at its Princeton headquarters. Others are based in national program offices, including the *Local Funding Partnerships Initiative* and *Community Catalyst*, or in other public health settings, including the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials.

Pérez has served, in her words, as a “meta-mentor,” providing guidance to all 22 RWJF-sponsored fellows. Pérez’s own entrée into philanthropy began with her experience as a National Urban Fellow in the class of 1997. After completing her mentorship at *New Jersey Health Initiatives*, and then earning her PhD from Harvard, she was invited back to RWJF as a program officer in 2004.

“From the inside of RWJF I thought about how we can do better in diversifying our staff and accessing some of the talent that I knew was out there,” she says. Her aim was “to expose other people as I was exposed to philanthropy as a potential career.”

Fellows assigned to RWJF are rigorously oriented to the Foundation—Dante McKay describes a series of 15 sessions to introduce basic practices and procedures, two learning sessions focused on strategic planning and Medicaid, and executive-level and media skills training.

Each fellow is then given a specific, high-level assignment and receives additional mentoring by staff members directly involved in the program on which they are working. Catherine West, MPA, for example, served as project director for *New Connections*, designed to increase RWJF’s exposure to researchers from historically underrepresented communities. Today, she is director of Health Systems Policy and Stakeholder Relations at the Center for Health Information and Analysis in Boston. (Read [West’s profile](#).)

Leticia Peguero and Erik Estrada both laid the groundwork for new RWJF initiatives. Working with the Vulnerable Populations team, Peguero helped to plan a program geared to young men of color while Estrada made the case for investing in a capacity-building initiative for minority-led agencies in New Jersey.

Beyond their specific assignments, fellows are fully integrated into the life of the Foundation and encouraged to be visible. “I became immersed in the work that RWJF was doing, learning about it on a daily basis,” says Jason León. “You are privy to the information they have, you participate in the grantmaking, in the RFP [request for proposal] processes, the planning, the meetings, the retreats... Having an opinion that was heard on team—that was amazing.”

As they help fellows develop professional skills, mentors also pull back the curtain on the more subtle dimensions of attaining positions of authority. “I worked closely with them to understand our culture, what works here, what doesn’t, where the hierarchies are and where the politics are,” says Pérez. Often, she will offer two perspectives on the same question. “I give them the official answer and then, off the record, say, ‘Here is what you have to understand about the background, the history.’ It is frank, honest conversation with someone looking out for you.”

Estrada talked about some of the “soft skills” he learned. “A supervisor needs to be worried about work performance and getting the job done, but as a mentor they give advice and guidance on pieces that might not necessarily affect my ability to do my job—things like how I present myself.” For example, he had a close relationship with Calvin Bland, then a special adviser to RWJF’s president and now special adviser to *New Jersey Health Initiatives*, who reminded him from time to time not to use the southern slang ‘y’all.’ “I appreciated it,” Estrada says. “They wanted to position me to do the best I can do.”

Introducing All Fellows to Health Policy

In 2010, RWJF provided additional funding to support the Health Policy Advocacy and Education Initiative at National Urban Fellows, which is designed to build greater awareness of health-related policy issues among all of the fellows participating in the MPA program.

The dual goal was to interest more people of color in pursuing leadership positions in health policy and academia and to ensure that all fellows have a basic grounding in health-related issues. Regardless of where they land professionally, “It is so fundamental to have an appreciation for the role health plays in the vitality of a community,” National Urban Fellows board member Gauda says. “It just makes sense for all leaders to be aware of.”

The health-related strands woven into the program include a series of seminars and webinars on key issues and an annual full-day symposium. In 2011, health was the theme of the annual National Leadership Conference, a four-day event that included a health and career fair and sessions on health inequality, community collaborations, and integrated solutions to health challenges.

As part of the effort to expand the emphasis on health policy, Baruch agreed to include an elective, “Health Politics and Policymaking,” in the curriculum. The course is required of all MPA fellows. In making the case for the new course, Miguel A. Garcia Jr. told Baruch officials: “Given the importance that health care has taken in the national dialogue around the Affordable Care Act, I think we are really talking about a long-term investment that we want to make on behalf of our fellows. When they move on to whatever organization they move on to, we want them to be knowledgeable advocates.”

“We are looking to share with these emerging policy-makers an understanding of health care policy and the disparities in health care.”—Miguel A. Garcia Jr. (’85), National Urban Fellows president

Adding to an already jam-packed schedule, fellows also are required to participate in teams to design a hypothetical solution to a local, state, or national health issue. One team created a strategy for health centers and schools to work together to ensure students have up-to-date immunizations, eyeglasses, and a list of affordable dental clinics. Another designed a service for immigrant families to get care at local clinics in their native language.

“They look at common issues and try to develop some collaborative solutions,” explains Garcia. The teams are not just tossing out an idea—they are developing a budget, estimating the number of individuals the project could reach, identifying the agencies that need to come to the table, and developing an evaluation strategy.

To wrap up the assignment, teams make a 30-minute presentation on their projects at the annual symposium before a panel of judges, which includes RWJF and Baruch representatives. The judges take their responsibilities seriously, asking a lot of questions before designating one team a winner. At the 2012 symposium, held at RWJF’s Princeton offices, the teams were startled when RWJF President Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, MD, MBA, walked in as the competition was underway and lobbed a question at one of the teams.

WHAT ARE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT RESULTS TO DATE?

The results of the National Urban Fellows program can be understood at many levels—from the perspective of fellows being groomed for leadership, the workplaces that have trained and hired them, and the mentors who guide them.

Nurturing Leadership Capacity

Since its inception, National Urban Fellows alumni have assumed leadership positions across the country, and in every sector of the economy. According to the program's [website](#):

- More than 4 in 10 (43.6%) hold government positions (city 19.8%), (state 13.9%) and (federal 9.9%). Almost the same proportion (41.6%) work in nonprofit (27.7%) and educational (13.9%) institutions. The rest work in corporate environments (7.9%), at foundations (4%), or independently (3%).
- Almost two-thirds of alumni (60%–63%) consider themselves leaders in the policy-making arena, have held a community or civic role, and have the ability to affect a real-world or organizational outcome.
- Almost three-quarters of them (73%) say they feel prepared to fill vacancies left as executive leaders retire.

The Health Policy Advocacy and Education Initiative has been uniquely influential, most likely playing an important role in the decision of 15 percent of the graduating class of 2011 to pursue careers in the health field.

Although it is impossible to measure the degree of their influence, board member Gauda is convinced that the National Urban Fellows program nurtures “courageous social justice leadership.”

“We are giving our fellows permission to be that kind of leader,” she says. “We are taking people who want to make it in a position of leadership and giving them the support, training, courage, skills, and network of people like themselves. If this was not done purposefully, you can be assured it would not happen by default.”

Alumni overwhelmingly say the program design is working: 50 percent said it met their expectations and 38 percent say it exceeded them, according to a survey conducted by Baruch College as part of the program's 40th anniversary celebration in 2009.⁴

Beyond the data are telling anecdotes from alumni. “I was able to become more of a dynamic professional in what I brought to the table,” says Jason León, while Leticia Peguero calls her mentorship an “amazing opportunity to see myself in a different light.”

⁴ National Urban Fellows. *Changing the Face of Public Service Leadership* 2009.

Alumnus Catherine West says the National Urban Fellows experience taught her “to think big, to think boldly, to create change,” and to understand some of the unspoken rules that need to be recognized in order to have influence.

Building a Pipeline into Philanthropy

Philanthropy remains “a very closed world, a very white world,” says alumnus Peguero. “How do people get here?” National Urban Fellows is helping foundations answer that question by inviting them to serve as mentorship sites—and doors have cracked open as a result.

Some 180 National Urban Fellows have been mentored in foundation settings during the life of the program, and about 75 alumni now work there, according to President and CEO Garcia. “Getting a foot in the door of philanthropy is just a great opportunity. Chances are that you may end up in a job in the world of philanthropy just because you have had the opportunity to work in a philanthropic institution.”

The California Endowment, based in Los Angeles, has brought on two fellows annually over the past two years. “We obviously want to encourage young people of color coming from the National Urban Fellows to get exposed to philanthropy and see it as a valuable institution in community change,” said Raymond Colmenar, a senior program manager at the Endowment with expertise in neighborhoods. “Hopefully, it will influence their thinking, whether as a grantseeker or grantmaker or policy-maker, to see the important role that philanthropy can play in society.”

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation in Miami has mentored four fellows over four years, and sees its mentoring role as one way to contribute to the greater good. “We value diversity and believe there is a shortage of diversity in the field of philanthropy,” says Damian Thorman, Knight’s national program director. “We want to do our part; we see it as a part of our civic responsibility.”

Over time, says Peguero, such efforts pay off by creating “a pipeline of people who speak the language, understand the nuances, and can then compete with other folks who get in because they know where to look for jobs; they know how to compete.”

The Power of Mentoring

As they help bring the next generation of leaders along, many mentors recognize that personal and professional benefits also accrue to them. “It has made me more reflective of what I have learned in philanthropy,” says the California Endowment’s Colmenar. In

helping fellows navigate the foundation, Colmenar finds himself thinking more about how the work can be socially useful, and “to be explicit in conversation with folks who are there to actually learn about what it means to be in a foundation.”

Bob Eckardt, executive vice president of the Cleveland Foundation, recognizes further benefits as today’s National Urban Fellows become tomorrow’s influential policy-makers. For example, “When you take someone who was a National Urban Fellow and suddenly they are head of the utilities department or in the mayor’s office, we think of it not just as a benefit to the person, but also to the foundation.” Those “new connections” are especially important for a community foundation that works with a range of community leaders.”

Mentoring relationships often endure once the fellowship is over. “I still use what I got from Debra Pérez,” says Catherine West. “She has continued to mentor me to this day with every job and career transition, whether [about] interviewing, salary negotiations, or who she knows in her network to connect me to informational interviews. If I have a challenging situation with management, she has been there to talk it through.”

WHAT CHALLENGES IS THE PROGRAM FACING?

Although the National Urban Fellows trains la crème de la crème, it cannot alone pull down all the barriers lingering in the workplace. Almost three-quarters of alumni surveyed by Baruch say they have experienced discrimination in some form. Respondents reported that the discrimination manifested itself as blocked avenues to promotion, biased remarks, and lack of professional opportunities.

That finding does not surprise many people of color, who often get the overt or subtle message that they somehow count a little less. Debra Pérez recalls telling a colleague that she had been admitted to Harvard University to pursue her PhD, only to hear him respond, “Oh, I’m sure being Latina has a lot to do with it.” His assumption that talent and drive could not account for her success is typical, she says. “You are always having to defend and define the right to be who you are, and to defend being in the place you are.”

Erik Estrada is also familiar with inappropriate assumptions. Far too often he hears careless comments in presumably enlightened environments. “I have been asked by faculty on campus if I have ever been in a gang,” he says, as though that is inevitably a part of any Latino male from California’s life experience. “I have been stopped by the campus police, leaving work late or on the weekends, because they were ‘wondering what I was doing.’ Why would they question that?”

“Even at the Foundation, I heard people laughing at the names of some of the leaders of our grantee organizations for being different. More out of ignorance than any ill intent, it highlighted the need for increased diversity.”

Since its launch, National Urban Fellows has promoted diversity in leadership in order to change those kinds of attitudes. Yet as people of color push further towards the top, they can get lonely. Alumni Jason León and Danté McKay both comment about being the only person of color at many high-level meetings.

When there is only one person of color in a crowded room, “You do notice that there isn’t the representation, and you do wonder if they take your opinion a little differently.”—Jason León, National Urban Fellows alumnus

WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?

Among alumni of the program, the theme of building networks comes up over and over. Indeed, more than 80 percent of alumni in the Baruch survey said that having continued opportunities to network with other fellows was either “very important” or “somewhat important.” The lesson here is that creating opportunities to connect people can never happen too much.

Erik Estrada believes the program should be more intentional in its efforts to promote diversity. Putting diverse people together is a start, he says, but it is not enough. “Just because you put this group together, it doesn’t mean it is going to gel,” he said. “That is kind of an assumption they make, without thinking it through all the way.”

Leticia Peguero, too, wants to see more formal mechanisms for linking alumni, especially after the program ends. National Urban Fellows “needs to think strategically about how they galvanize alumni to provide professional development opportunities or a social network.”

Stepping back to take a broader view, Debra Pérez offered a number of lessons about what it takes for people of color to attain leadership positions. At the level of the individual, she says, “It takes resilience; it takes the right attitudes; it takes letting go and forgiveness. You can be stopped by the obstacles that face you, or you can see them as opportunities for growth.”

Organizational characteristics matter too, beginning with creating a culture of inclusivity. “You don’t want to hire just one person of color, it makes it very hard to create networks and to thrive if you feel you are the only one,” Pérez observes. A more successful

strategy for diversity “is the cohort approach, where you hire three or four people at the same time so they have their own network and can support each other.”

An organization also needs to be deliberate in designing its investment in leadership development. “Not everyone is good at coaching and mentoring,” she points out.

“It takes the right combination of hard work, political savviness, authenticity and genuine passion.”—Debra Pérez, PhD, MA, MPA, former RWJF assistant vice president of research and evaluation

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

RWJF has renewed its support for the National Urban Fellows' MPA Fellowship through June 2014.⁵ The \$500,000 grant supports four fellows per year at RWJF and affiliated health policy organizations and the continuation of the Public Health Policy Advocacy and Education Initiative.

In addition to the webinars and annual symposium, a new initiative proposed for 2013–2014 is a Healthcare and Health Policy Executive Development program for fellows, mentors, alumni, and others. The program will include alumni executive coaching and talent development; program evaluation; the design of a talent pipeline network; and social media, health care, and policy programming.

Exploring new ways to highlight alumni while drawing on their expertise and resources as they advance in their careers is part of the overall strategy of National Urban Fellows going forward—not only the RWJF-funded initiative.

“We really must support the careers of our fellows. We want them to have great career opportunities,” says Juanita Gauda. “It is very important that the marketplace understands the tremendous human capital investment we have made in these leaders and what great contributions they can make to an organization.”

As they tout the accomplishments of their alumni, the program is also asking them to give back. “We now have individuals all over the country in leadership positions,” says National Urban Fellows President Emeritus Alvarez. “I’ve always felt they should be able to support the organization that made it possible for them.”

A deliberate strategy of engagement is being put in place so that can happen. In the first three years after they graduate, alumni will be asked to recruit like-minded individuals who recognize the value of participating in the National Urban Fellows program. That

⁵ ID# 70147 (\$500,000, July 15, 2012–July 14, 2014)

request will continue in years four to seven, but program staff will also be asking alumni to “put their pockets where their mouth is,” Garcia explains. “We expect our alums to begin to contribute to sustain the program.”

Then, seven to 10 years out, “many of our alums should reach these critical positions where they can be mentors and maybe sit on our board of directors. We figure if we have you on the hook from years 1 to 10, that means you will have sustained involvement.”

If that strategy works, says Garcia, “I see a bright future for National Urban Fellows. We must be at the table to reflect the diversity of America. Diversity is in the best interest of our country. It will take a consistent, steady pipeline of individuals interested in serving the public interest.”

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APPENDIX

People Interviewed for This Report

(Affiliations current as of the time of the interviews, summer 2013)

National Urban Fellows Staff and Board Members

Luis Alvarez ('72)

President Emeritus
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Miguel A. Garcia, Jr. ('85)

President and CEO
National Urban Fellows
New York, N.Y.

Jacinta Gauda

Chair of Corporate Communications
Grayling USA
Board Member, National Urban Fellows
New York, N.Y.

Alumni

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Jason León, MPA ('09)

Director of Corporate Relations,
Communications, and Programs
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Danté McKay, JD, MPA ('11)

Georgia State Director
Enroll America
Atlanta, Ga.

Leticia Peguero, MPA ('08)

Executive Director
Andrus Family Fund
New York, N.Y.

Catherine West, MPA ('08)

Director of External Research
Director of Health Systems Policy and
Stakeholder Relations
Center for Health Information and Analysis
Boston, Mass.

Mentors

Ray Colmenar, MPP

Senior Program Manager
The California Endowment
Oakland, Calif.

Bob Eckardt, PHD

Executive Vice President
The Cleveland Foundation
Cleveland, Ohio

Debra Joy Pérez, PhD, MA, MPA

Vice President for Knowledge Support
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Baltimore, Md.

Damian Thorman, JD, MBA

National Program Director
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Miami, Fla.

PROFILES OF NATIONAL URBAN FELLOWS

Erik Estrada, MPA (October 2013)

Jason León, MPA (October 2013)

Danté McKay, JD, MPA (October 2013)

Leticia Peguero, MPA (October 2013)

Catherine West, MPA (October 2013)